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LETTERS TO THE EDITORS:

Sees CIA Slandering Case As Frightening

The Editors: A news article was tucked away on page 34 of your April 21 issue, entitled, "Agents Free From Laws? Up to Judge." No article in this paper upset and frightened me as this one and I feel that I must state what this article means to me, thereby explaining my concern.

This article was relatively vague, but in essence it stated that a member of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) purposely slandered the national commander of the "Estonian Emigre Organization." The article further states the CIA admits to the statements made, admits that they were made per the instructions of the CIA, neither admits nor denies if they are true, and refuses any further comment on the basis that it would be "contrary to the security of the United States."

The CIA further claims that their agent is not "subject to the ordinary processes of law," and is immune from prosecution for slander because of his "special role in the nation's defense." A U.S. district court judge must now decide whether this agent can or cannot be prosecuted.

I have never heard of any of the participants in this case, know nothing of the organization, and know no particulars of the case. What upsets me is that any governmental agency (or anyone, for that matter) feels that they are not "subject to the ordinary processes of law." We only have to look into recent history to find this language and this very principle used as the primary means by which a government took over complete control of a country and

a disastrous war.

In the early 1930s, the Nazi party organized the S.A. and the S.S. and from these grew the Gestapo. The members of these organizations were declared immune to the ordinary processes of law and thereby could kidnap, murder, torture, and perform every despicable crime known to man.

Under the guise of the language stated in the case described in the article, they eliminated all political opposition and turned Germany into a torture chamber, and the Nazis became absolute masters of their country. In the beginning their actions were just as innocent sounding as the actions of the CIA are in this case, but they established precedent in this type case which allowed them eventually to operate in any manner they saw fit.

I am well aware that we are in the midst of a struggle for our actual existence. However, one thing that makes this country great is that every man is accountable for his actions to our judicial system and this guarantees that all of us are protected from unjust actions (including false accusations). If the judge declares that the agents of CIA are not subject to our laws, he will have opened a Pandora's box and no one know what it will bestow on us.

It is not hard to imagine the possible consequences if an organization is established that is not subject to our laws comes under the control of men who want to use it for their own purposes — even though it was created by men with the best intentions.

STANLEY P. STEINBERG.